

SENATE NO. 283

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A GRANT PROGRAM FOR THE PURPOSE OF EXPANDING LEARNING TIME AND IMPROVING STUDENT SUCCESS

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled,
And by the authority of the same, as follows:*

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 69 of the General Laws is hereby amended by striking out section 1G and
2 inserting in place thereof the following new section: -

3 Section 1G.

4 (a) The board shall establish the minimum length for a school day and the minimum number of
5 days in the school year.

6 (b) There shall be an Expanded Learning Time Grant Program, hereinafter referred to as “the
7 program”. The program shall be administered by the department and shall have the following
8 purposes:

9 (1) To expand learning time in the form of longer school days, additional school days or a
10 combination of longer school days and additional school days;

11 (2) To provide school districts the opportunity to add additional time to the school schedule in
12 order to redesign their educational program and offer challenging learning experiences focused
13 on raising student achievement. This additional time shall be designed to:

14 i. provide more instructional opportunities in mathematics, literacy, science and other core
15 subjects to support academic proficiency;

16 ii. provide educators with increased opportunities to work collaboratively and to participate in
17 professional development;

18 (3) To provide a framework for sustained state funding for school districts who voluntarily
19 extend their school day or year;

20 (4) To provide school districts the opportunity to add or expand programs and curricula such as
21 arts, music, health, sports, drama, and other learning opportunities for which they do not have
22 time in the current school calendar;

23 (5) To encourage schools to form partnerships with community-based organizations and
24 institutions of higher learning to provide additional opportunities to children; and

25 (6) To provide for accountability to ensure the efficient and effective implementation of
26 expanded learning time in participating districts.

27 (c) For the purposes of this section, the following definitions shall apply:

28 “Accountability plan”, plan developed by a school district to measure and track the efficiency
29 and effectiveness of expanded learning time schools.

30 “Annual accountability review”, process by which the department will review the progress of a
31 school district’s implementation of its expanded learning time program.

32 “Department”, The department of education

33 “Planning grant proposal”, application for planning grant submitted to the department by a
34 school district.

35 “Planning grant:”, grant awarded to a school district for the purpose of planning for a longer
36 school day or year.

37 “Implementation plan”, plan developed by a school district to expand the school day and/or year
38 at selected schools.

39 “Implementation grant”, grant awarded to a school district to expand learning time by
40 lengthening school days or the school year at selected schools through its implementation plan.

41 (d)(1) All school districts shall be eligible for planning grants under this program, but priority
42 shall be given to: (i) districts with more than 25% of students eligible for free and reduced lunch
43 programs; (ii) districts in the bottom ten per-cent of statewide grade ten MCAS scores; (iii)
44 districts whose proposals use partnerships with community-based organizations and institutions
45 of higher education. Not less than 60% of all funds granted under this program shall be awarded
46 to prioritized districts.

47 (2) In awarding grants, the department shall promote the inclusion of districts not given such
48 priority in order to demonstrate the efficacy and value of the program across a broad range of
49 districts and schools relative to the socioeconomic status and achievement levels of the students
50 they educate.

51 (3) Planning grant proposals under this act shall include, but not be limited to:

52 i. the process the district will use to create an expanded learning time implementation plan;

53 ii. a budget necessary to create this plan;

54 iii. a rationale for expanding learning time that describes how the expansion of time will help
55 the school(s) attain its school improvement goals;

56 iv. the anticipated number of schools and students that will be affected; and

57 v. identification of individuals who will participate in the planning process, including
58 representatives of teachers unions, parents, administrators and school partners.

59 (e) (1) Districts shall be eligible for implementation grants only after submitting an
60 implementation plan and having the plan approved by the department. The department shall
61 approve implementation plans that include:

- 62 i. no less than 315 additional hours than is standard for the implementing district
- 63 ii. mandatory additional time for all students in participating schools, provided that districts may
64 phase in the additional time over a reasonable period of time as determined by the department
65 and the department may provide for exceptions to this provision in extraordinary circumstances.
- 66 iii. a comprehensive restructuring of the entire school schedule and educational program to
67 better utilize the time in school;
- 68 iv. a comprehensive budget sufficient to fund the approved plan;
- 69 v. evidence of support from any collective bargaining units, or community-based organizations
70 or higher education institutions involved in implementation;
- 71 vi. documentation of leadership capacity to implement the expansion of learning time; and

72 (f) Districts that are already participating in the program shall be eligible for implementation
73 grants under paragraph (1).

74 (g) The department shall develop guidelines to annually review the progress being made by
75 each district with an approved implementation plan. These guidelines shall include, but not be
76 limited to the requirement for:

- 77 (1) an accountability plan, using specific measurable goals to annually and longitudinally assess
78 the implementation and the impact of additional learning time on student achievement,
79 retention, attendance, higher educational attainment and other relevant measures. This plan may
80 include but not be limited to the collection and reporting to the department of the following:

81 attendance data, student, teacher, parent and school partner impact and satisfaction, disciplinary
82 data, standardized test scores, grades, numbers of students attending the participating schools
83 and all appropriate comparison data; and

84 (2) Each school and district must participate in any evaluation or accountability process
85 implemented by or authorized by the department.

86 (3) In the event that the department is not satisfied with the results of the annual review, the
87 department shall, within a reasonable period of time, notify the district of remedial steps
88 necessary to be eligible for continued funding under this program. In the event that such
89 remedial steps are not taken, the department may decline to include that district in its annual
90 budget recommendation for subsequent years.

91 (h)(1) The department shall issue an annual report, not later than January 31 of each year,
92 describing and analyzing the implementation of plans in all participating districts. The reports
93 shall include, but not be limited to: the number of school and school districts participating; the
94 number of students attending these schools; the nature and type of changes in school learning
95 time funded through this program by school and school district; a list of outside vendors with
96 whom the department has contracted to provide technical support services, the amount each
97 vendor has received, and the results obtained in each instance; the annual assessments of impact
98 provided by the districts and any other data related to expanded learning time in participating
99 schools and districts. This report shall be provided to the secretary of administration and
100 finance, the senate president, the speaker of the house, the chairs of the house and senate ways
101 and means committees and the joint committee on education.

102 (2) The department shall also provide not later than January 15th a comprehensive budget for
103 this program for the next fiscal year, provided that such budget include:

104 i. the number of anticipated participating students, including students enrolled with a longer
105 school schedule pursuant to a previously approved implementation plan and the number of
106 students enrolled in newly approved implementation plans.

107 ii. a comprehensive budget for funding subsequent planning grants; and

108 iii. a comprehensive budget for funding of implementation plans anticipated to be approved by
109 the department, including state funding of not less than \$1,350 per student in each participating
110 school plus an annual inflation index consistent with the provisions of section 2 of Chapter 70
111 starting in fiscal year 2009.

112 (3) This recommendation shall be provided to the secretary of administration and finance, the
113 senate president, the speaker of the house of representatives, the chairs of the house and senate
114 ways and means committees and the joint committee on education.

115 (i)(1) The department may expend funds to administer this program. These expenditures shall
116 include, but not be limited to, the following: (i) creation of an application process for planning
117 grants; (ii) review and approval of qualifying planning grant proposals; (iii) review and approval
118 of implementation plans submitted by those districts awarded planning grants, (iv) technical
119 assistance to implementing districts (v) compliance monitoring of participating districts and (vi)
120 annual and longitudinal evaluations of the impact of the program. These expenditures shall not
121 exceed four percent of any funds appropriated for the purposes of this program.

122 (2) The department shall, for the purpose of this program, provide technical support to
123 participating schools and districts that may include, but is not limited to: direct services,
124 developing documentation of best practices and the creation of a network of implementing
125 schools and districts. The department may partner or contract with external organizations as
126 necessary to fulfill its obligations under this section.

127 (3) The department may promulgate appropriate regulations to carry out this section.

128 (j)(1) At the conclusion of the fourth year of this program, a program review commission shall
129 convene to evaluate the effectiveness of this program. The commission shall be co-chaired by
130 the House and Senate chairs of the Joint Committee on Education. The commission shall be
131 made up of the president of the senate or his designee and the speaker of the house or his
132 designee; the president of the Massachusetts Teachers Association or his designee; the president
133 of the Massachusetts Federation of Teachers, or his designee; a member selected by the
134 Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents; a member selected by the Massachusetts
135 Association of School Committees; one representative from an educational non-profit
136 organization and one member representing the business community both chosen by the senate
137 president; and one representative from an educational non-profit organization and one member
138 representing the business community both chosen by the speaker of the house.

139 (2) The commission shall review the program in its entirety and issue a report of its findings,
140 including an analysis of all relevant data so as to determine the effectiveness of the program.
141 The report shall include specific legislative recommendations including, but not limited to, the
142 following:

- 143 i. whether the current school calendar as defined by the department under subsection (a) is
144 sufficient;
- 145 ii. whether the program should be expanded, maintained or discontinued;
- 146 iii. a schedule and method for ongoing accountability of implementation plans; and
- 147 iv. a permanent method of calculating the annual minimum state aid for an approved
148 implementation plan, on a per pupil basis, and, if appropriate, on a per community basis.

149 (3) This report shall be provided to the secretary of administration and finance, the senate
150 president, the speaker of the house, the chairs of the house and senate ways and means
151 committees and the joint committee on education.